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THESIS

Writers and Writing in the Silver Age as seen in Pliny's Letters

BY

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THESIS

Writers and Writing in the Silver Age
as seen in Pliny's Letters.

I. Writing

A. Education

Under the influence of the Greeks a literary education became established in the Roman Empire and with the early Empire there was developed an elaborate system consisting of (1) elementary schools, which had existed from earliest times, (2) grammar or secondary schools, (3) rhetorical schools and, in certain centres as Rome, Constantinople, Marseilles, Athens, Rhodes, Mytilene, Ephesus, Pergamum, and other centres of learning, higher institutions resembling the modern university.

1. Training in literature and writing

The elements in Roman education that bear on writing and writers and tended to create an interest in literature and writing were the grammar or secondary schools. The grammar school was taught by the grammaticus under whom the pupil studied literature with an especial stress laid on poetry. Sometimes formal instruction began sooner in Greek than in Latin, a practice approved of by Quintilian. This fact explains why so many men in Pliny's time quote Greek authors with such ease. The master dictated a great deal, usually proverbs and selections from great literature, and these were used as material for compositions or were committed to memory. Cultivation of the memory held a very important place in

Roman education. The pupil usually went to the grammaticus to study literature at the age of twelve and stayed with this master until he was sixteen, when he assumed the toga virilis. During these years the pupil became familiar with Greek and Latin authors and was given a great deal of practice in the writing of Latin verse. The great importance placed on poetry explains why so many of Pliny's friends turned to verse writing for the enjoyment and use of their leisure time. In Greek Homer was studied first, then Hesiod, and then the dramatists and lyric writers. In Latin the poets chiefly read were Livius Andronicus, Ennius, Plautus, Terence, Virgil, Horace, Lucan, Statius. Quintilian thought it best to begin with Virgil, even though his writings were difficult for the pupils to understand.

From wall inscriptions and fragments that have been found, Virgil's Aeneid seems to have been the book that every Roman boy must have studied with great care. When excavations were made years after Pompeii was buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 A.D., scribblings of parts from Vergil's Aeneid were found on the walls, showing that Virgil was studied by the school boys in 79 A.D. Virgil was evidently a household name in the first century A.D., and even before that scraps of the Aeneid have been found on tombs from the Rhine to the desert of Arabia.

2. Training of an orator

The rhetorical school was taught by a rhetor whose

chief duty was to give the pupil a thorough training in the art and practice of effective public speaking. With the loss of liberty under the Empire, oratory lost its chief inspiration and education became largely a matter of formal training in which even literature became a study of form. This thorough training in formal prose writing consisted of writing orations, themes, narratives, and arguments on out of the way subjects with stress laid on form rather than subject matter and tended to a certain artificiality. This was followed by practice in declaiming. The most difficult of all were the exercises in the attacking and defending of the laws. As we review the lives of some of the most famous men of the first century A.D., we find that each one was nearly always an advocate before he entered a political or literary career and therefore it is small wonder that all the boys were obliged to study prose writing and public speaking.

B. Interest in Literature

Interest in literature in the days of the Silver Age manifests itself in a variety of ways. In the education of the Roman boy, literature held a prominent place from very early years. So at a tender age the boy became familiar with the famous literary names and even had learned by heart many passages of their most famous writings. Pliny from time to time in his letters shows us how the minds of adults were turned toward literature.

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1. Interest in reading

When Pliny writes to Attius Clemens he says,--- "Si quando urbs nostra liberalibus studiis floruit, nunc maxime floret. Multa claraque exempla sunt; sufficeret unum Euphrates philosophus."[1] The remainder of this letter goes on to praise the philosopher, Euphrates, for whom Pliny has great respect.

Pliny in writing to his friend Rufus expresses great pleasure over a visit to the country to Terentius Junior. Thinking of him as a good father and a good farmer, Pliny started conversation on those subjects in which he judged Terentius could take an active part,"--- cum ille me doctissimo sermone revocavit ad studia. Quam tersa omnia, quam Latina, quam Graeca! ----- Quantum ille legit, quantum tenet! Athenis vivere hominem, non in villa putes."[2] Pliny was surprised and delighted to find such a learned and literary man living on a farm.

a. Book read to master by slave

Another incident that shows itself repeatedly in intimate glimpses of Roman life and one that proves that there was a genuine interest in literature in their lives is the picture of a slave reading aloud to his master.

In one letter Pliny shows great solicitude and grief because on their journey his slave, Encolpius, has been taken ill with throat trouble, which will perhaps make him unable to render the literary services of reading to his master in a very pleasing voice and Pliny says mournfully --- "Quis deinde

1. I 10-1
2. VII 25-3

libellos meos sic leget sic amabit? Quem aures meae sic sequentur."[1]

In the letter describing Spurinna's ideal use of his old age, we find references to the slave being ever ready to read to his master. For a part of the morning the program of Spurinna was --- "Si adsunt amici, honestissimi sermones explicantur: si non, liber legitur."[2] And again after exercising --- "Lotus accubat et paulisper cibum differt; interim audit legentem remissius aliquid et dulcius."[3]

In the letter describing his uncle's very busy life Pliny says that during dinner --- "Liber legebatur, adnotabatur et quidem cursim."[4] When the Elder Pliny got out of his bath --- "Nam dum destringitur tergiturque, audiebat aliquid aut dictabat."[5] In speaking of his manner of life in his Tuscan villa Pliny says --- "Cenanti mihi, si cum uxore vel paucis, liber legitur; post cenam comoedus aut lyristes."[6] Another instance of readings being given as entertainment at dinner is found in the following letter which Pliny wrote to his friend Septicius Clarus, reprimanding him for not having kept his engagement to dine with him --- "Audisses comoedum vel lectorem vel lyristen vel, quae mea liberalitas, omnes."[7]

b. Making extracts of books read

It was a practice among the Romans of the Silver Age to read a great deal both prose and poetry and to make extracts of the book read. Pliny, the Elder, was a firm believer in the value of making extracts from the books he read, and when he

1. VIII 1-2
2. III 1-4
3. III 1-8
4. III 5-11
5. III 5-14
6. IX 36-4
7. I 15-2

died he left many note books completely filled with such excerpts. In writing about the industry of his uncle, Pliny, the Elder, Pliny tells us --- "Post cibum saepe -- liber legebatur, adnotabat excerpebatque. Nihil enim legit, quod non excerperet; dicere etiam solebat nullum esse librum tam malum, ut non aliqua parte prodesset."[1]

Pliny began this practice of making extracts, which he had learned from his uncle, at an early age for when he was in his eighteenth year and his uncle had, the day before, hurried away to take help to the sufferers at the time of the eruption of Vesuvius, Pliny (after having explained that he had refused to go with his uncle) writes that the next morning --- "Posco librum Titi Livii et quasi per otium lego, atque etiam, ut coeperam, excerpo."[2]

Pliny, the Elder, was certainly a tireless worker. When he went from place to place he always had --- "Ad latus notarius cum libro et pugillaribus, cuius manus hieme manicis muniebantur, ut ne caeli quidem asperitas ullum studiis tempus eriperet; qua ex causa Romae quoque sella vehebatur."[3]

2. Interest in writing

From a careful reading of Pliny's letters one gains the general impression that there was keen interest in writing. Pliny seems to be urging everyone, no matter how mediocre his talent, to write if he has the least inclination. A great deal of writing must have been done which has not survived and very probably most of it was not worthy of surviving. There

1. III 5-10
2. VI 20-5
3. III 5-15

were many readings (recitationes) and there is no doubt, judging from the many letters urging friends to write, of Pliny's feeling and interest in writing.

a. Pliny's estimate of the importance of writing (examples in letters urging friends to write)

In twenty-five different letters we find Pliny urging as many different friends of his to write or to write more or to publish their productions. Writing seemed to be a very common practice and there were many aspirants to literary honors. We shall only quote from a few of these letters, which will be enough to show us that one of Pliny's obsessions was to urge and encourage his friends to write and then to read and publish what they had written.

To Suetonius he writes a letter impatiently asking where his poetry that he has promised is, and he says to him by way of conclusion --- "Patere me videre titulum tuum; patere audire describi, legi, venire volumina Tranquilli mei."[1]

In several instances we find Pliny speaking of immortality gained by the writer through his writings. He says that earthly things perish with us but a writer lives on in his writings. He brings out this same idea of immortality in a letter to Caninius Rufus who has gone to his country villa at Comum and tells him to forget the common cares of man and write, " ----- et ipse te in alto isto pinguique secessu studiis adseris? ----- Effinge aliquid et excude, quod sit

1. V 10-3

perpetuo tuum. Nam reliqua rerum tuarum post te alium atque alium dominum sortientur, hoc numquam tuum desinet esse, si semel coeperit."[1] And again in a letter to Octavius in which he says after urging him to write --- "Habe ante oculos mortalitatem, a qua adserere te hoc uno monimento potes; nam cetera fragilia et caduca non minus quam ipsi homines occidunt desinuntque."[2]

A rich compliment he pays to Arrius Antoninus when he writes to him --- "Quo magis hortor, ut quam plurima proferas, quae imitari omnes concupiscant, nemo aut paucissimi possint."[3] To Romanus who has written to Pliny saying he is writing his impressions of him (Pliny), Pliny says --- "Gratias ago; agerem magis, si me illa ipsa, quae scribis aut dictas, legere voluisses."[4]

It is quite apparent that to Pliny and his friends writing was a pleasure, for to Saturninus he writes --- "Te negotiis distineri ob hoc moleste fero, quod deservire studiis non potes."[5] Pliny refused to take a case at law to please his friend Octavius Rufus and he quotes Homer and then says --- "Cur enim non usquequaque Homericis versibus agam tecum? Quatenus tu me tuis agere non pateris, quorum tanta cupiditate ardeo."[6] Pliny seems to be never too busy nor to have too many things on his mind to write a charming letter to some friend, complimenting him on his writing or urging him to write more.

1. I 3-3
2. II 10-4
3. V 15-2
4. IX 28-3
5. VII 7-2
6. I 7-5

b. The Recitatio

Public recitations which had begun in the time of Augustus had long been a recognized institution. A person who aspired to literary glory would hire a public room and invite his friends to come to hear him read what he had written or he would read to his friends in his own home or in public places like the baths. Sometimes there were so many recitations that it was a tiresome duty to stay at Rome to attend them.

Pliny gives his own reasons for making use of the recitatio in the following words --- "Recito tamen, quod illi an fecerint, nescio. (By 'illi' he means his predecessors) --- Itaque has recitandi causas sequor primum, quod ipse, qui recitat, aliquanto acrius scriptis suis auditorum reverentia intendit, deinde quod, de quibus dubitat, quasi ex consilii sententia statuit."[1] When he speaks of inviting his friends in to hear what he has written, Pliny says he stands in awe of them as a group --- "Nam, quod M. Cicero de stilo, ego de metu sentio. 'Timor est, timor emendator asperrimus'" [2,3]

In twenty-one different letters Pliny tells us about a recitation he has been to or has himself given or has heard about. Pliny was very obliging about listening to the literary productions of other people. Pliny writes --- "Magnum proventum poetarum annus hic attulit; toto mense Aprili nullus fere dies, quo non recitaret aliquis."[4] Pliny goes on to explain that he has missed almost none of these --- "Equidem prope nemini defui. Erant sane plerique amici; neque enim est fere quis-

1. V 3-7
2. Cicero - de Orat. 1,33,150
3. VII 17-13
4. I 13-1

quam, qui studia, ut non simul et nos amet."[1]

The length of these recitations to which many people went so faithfully was sometimes very great. We hardly blame people for trying to find a way of avoiding some of these recitations when we learn, for example, on one occasion that Pliny invited his friends to come to hear his Panegyric (written when he attained the consulship in 100 A.D.) and --- "foedissimis insuper tempestatibus, per biduum convenerunt, cumque modestia mea finem recitationi facere voluisset, ut adicerem tertium diem, exegerunt."[2] Pliny writes in another letter --- "Tertius dies est, quod audivi recitantem Sentium Augurinum cum summa mea voluptate, immo etiam admiratione."[3]

In Pliny's mind the kind of applause and the attitude of the listener were very important. He considered the practice of some in coming late, staying a short time, and leaving before the recitatio was over decidedly deplorable. "Plerique in stationibus sedent tempusque audiendi fabulis conterunt ac subinde sibi nuntiari iubent, an iam recitator intraverit, an dixerit praefationem, an ex magna parte evolverit librum; tunc demum, ac tunc quoque lente cunctanterque veniunt; nec tamen permanent, sed ante finem recedunt, alii dissimulanter et furtim, alii simpliciter et libere."[4] In another letter Pliny speaks of the silent applause that shows approval --- "Imaginor enim, qui concursus, quae admiratio te, qui clamor, quod etiam silentium maneat; quo ego, cum dico vel recito, non minus quam clamore delector, sit

1. I 13-5
2. III 18-4
3. IV 27-1
4. I 13-2

modo silentium acre et intentum et cupidum ulteriora audiendi."[1] And in still another letter he speaks of the people who do not even change their expression through a whole recitatio. "Recitabatur liber absolutissimus; hunc duo aut tres, ut sibi et paucis videntur, deserti, surdis mutisque similes audiebant. Non labra diduxerunt, non moverunt manum, non denique adsurrexerunt, saltem lassitudine sedendi."[2]

There are several incidents contained in Pliny's letters that give us pleasing and interesting facts about the recitations. In speaking of his wife's affection Pliny says --- "Eadem, si quando recito, in proximo discreta velo sedet laudesque nostras avidissimis auribus excipit."[3] Silius Italicus who was a famous person in the Roman life of his day even after he was bedridden continued to write and as Pliny says --- "Scribebat carmina maiore cura quam ingenio, non numquam iudicia hominum recitationibus experiebatur."[4] In another letter Pliny speaks of the time when the Emperor stopped and listened to a recitation --- "At Hercule memoria parentum Claudium Caesarem ferunt, cum in palatio spatiaretur audissetque clamorem, causam requisisse, cumque dictum esset recitare Nonianum, subitum recitanti inopinatumque venisse."[5]

c. The practice of writing (both prose and poetry) How widespread?

While the level of learning, appreciation, and achievement may not have been quite as high in the first century A.D. as in the Golden Age, nor could this period boast of as many literary men of the first magnitude, still the

1. II 10-7
2. VI 17-2
3. IV 19-3
4. III 7-5
5. I 13-3

Silver Age was characterized by a high level of intelligence and a wide spread of education. It was a well educated society and one educated to be sensitive to art and literature in their several branches. A characteristic of this age that is most interesting is the popularity of writing as practiced by laymen. It seemed to be the style for men of this age (we have only one reference in Pliny's letters to women writing) no matter what their regular calling was, to try their hand at writing --- old and young alike --- and they tried prose or poetry as their fancy led them. Again and again we find Pliny urging different friends to write and the recitatio was another interesting feature that went along with all this writing enthusiasm because they wanted to read to their friends what they had written, naturally hoping for approbation.

Pliny very nobly writes --- "Sum ex iis qui mirantur antiquos, non tamen, ut quidam, temporum nostrorum ingenia despicio."[1]

Poetry seemed to be the most popular form of literary expression for them to try. This is due to the fact that their early education stressed poetry and poetry writing to such a high degree. We find examples of various friends of Pliny writing poetry, some wrote one kind of poetry and some another. Sometimes a writer would choose a very lofty subject and write an epic, and we find Pliny saying to his friend Caninius who was writing an epic --- "Optime facis, quod bellum Dacicum scribere paras."[2] And of the old man Silius Italicus who

1. VI 21-1
2. VIII 4-1

wrote a long epic Pliny says --- "Scribebat carmina maiore cura quam ingenio, ---- "[1]

And again we find others writing elegiac poetry. We quote from a letter Pliny is writing to Spurinna to tell him that he has just heard Calpurnius Piso recite a very learned poem --- "Scripta elegis erat fluentibus et teneris et enodibus, sublimibus etiam, ut poposcit locus."[2] Pliny, in speaking of his friend Passennus Paullus who had a flare for writing elegiac poetry, writes --- "Passennus Paullus, splendidus eques Romanus et inprimis eruditus, scribit elegos. Gentilicium hoc illi: est enim municeps Propertii atque etiam inter maiores suos Propertium numerat."[3] We know also that Passennus wrote lyrics because Pliny in a letter to Severus is saying how alarmed he is to hear of the illness of Passennus Paullus because he is a very likable person and a very successful writer who closely resembles Propertius, and then Pliny adds --- "Nuper ad lyrica deflexit, in quibus ita Horatium, ut in illis illum alterum effingit."[4]

And we find another group of people who wrote lyrics. Of his friend Spurinna who was quite an old man, Pliny says --- "Scribit enim, et quidem utraque lingua, lyrica doctissime;-illis mira suavitas, mira hilaritas, cuius gratiam cumulat sanctitas scribentis."[5] Saturninus also wrote verses for in speaking of his many talents Pliny says --- "Praeterea facit versus, quales Catullus aut Calvus."[6] These may have been lyrics though Catullus and Calvus wrote other kinds of verses, too.

1. III 7-5
2. V 17-2
3. VI 15-1
4. IX 22-2
5. III 1-7
6. I 16-5

There are several references to people writing poetry in which we are not able to tell what kind of poetry they wrote. Augurinus was one of this class. He was a young man with poetic aspirations who lived to be famous only in his own day and about whose poems Pliny writes --- "Multa tenuiter, multa sublimiter, multa venuste, multa tenere, multa dulciter, multa cum bile."[1] To another friend Pliny writes --- "Cum versus tuos aemulor, tum maxime, quam sint boni, experior."[2]

There were writers of various kinds of prose. Some wrote letters and, in Pliny's mind, could write them very well because in speaking of his friend Voconius Romanus he writes: " ----- epistulas quidem scribit, ut Musas ipsas Latine loqui credas!"[3] In speaking again of Saturninus, Pliny says --- "Legit mihi nuper epistulas, quas uxoris esse dicebat; Plautum vel Terentium metro solutum legi credidi."[4] This certainly shows that literary aspirations were not confined to men.

And among the ones who wrote history we find this same Saturninus. Although he has not lived down to our times, still Pliny deemed him worthy of great praise. He must have been a versatile writer, for Pliny says after speaking of his speeches --- "Idem tamen in historia magis satisfaciet vel brevitate vel luce vel suavitate vel splendore etiam et sublimitate narrandi."[5] Of another friend, a busy advocate, Pliny writes in grieving over his untimely death --- "Quamvis enim agendis causis distringeretur, scribebat tamen exitus occisorum aut relegatorum a Nerone et iam tres libros absol-

1. IV 27-1
2. V 15-1
3. II 13-8
4. I 16-6
5. I 16-4

verat, -----"[1] This man evidently wrote a sort of history in which was a description of how some of the famous men met their death.

Pliny's letters have many examples in them of men writing orations either before delivery or revising them for publication after delivery. This was quite a common form of writing, due, of course, in part to the emphasis placed on oratory in the early education of the Romans. Of the speeches of Saturninus he says --- "Senties quod ego, cum orationes eius in manus sumpseris, quas facile cuilibet veterum, quorum est aemulus, comparabis ."[2]

There were some who wrote drama. One man whom Pliny mentions tried his hand at comedy. "Atque adeo nuper audii Vergilium Romanum paucis legentem comoediam ad exemplar veteris comoediae scriptam tam bene, ut esse quandoque possit exemplar."[3] Pliny calls Vergilius Romanus a writer of no small ability and goes on to say, "----- scripsit comoedias Menandrum aliosque aetatis eiusdem aemulatus; licet has inter Plautinas Terentianasque numeres."[4] Vergilius Rufus besides writing New Greek comedy after the manner of Menander wrote Old Greek comedy, whose greatest master was Aristophanes. "Nunc primum se in vetere comoedia, sed non tamquam inciperet, ostendit."[5]

And another man wrote tragedy. "Itaque Pomponius Secundus, hic scriptor tragoediarum, si quid forte familiarior amicus tollendum, ipse retinendum arbitraretur, dicere solebat:

1. V 5-3
2. I 16-3
3. VI 21-2
4. VI 21-4
5. VI 21-4

'Ad populum provoco' atque ita ex populi vel silentio vel adsensu aut suam aut amici sententiam sequebatur."[1]

Some of these contemporaries of Pliny wrote in Greek as well as in Latin. The lyric writer, Spurinna, wrote in both Greek and Latin. Arrius Antoninus wrote some Greek epigrams which Pliny greatly admired even to the extent of trying to put them into Latin, but he says the weakness of his poetic genius and --- "Ac potius, ut Lucretius ait, egestate patrii sermonis."[2, 3] To a man who was twice consul and had evidently been busy in government work Pliny writes --- "Ita certe sum adfectus ipse, cum Graeca epigrammata tua, cum iambos proxime legerem."[4] This quotation might also have been given earlier under the classification of poetry writers as the example of a writer of iambic verse.

We find several men mentioned by Pliny who were quite versatile and wrote poetry as well as prose. Among these men who wrote in varied forms of literature Saturninus is an outstanding example. We also have several men mentioned who have been or are busy in affairs of state and have turned to writing as an avocation; one was a lawyer and another had been consul. We are led to conclude from the above selections from Pliny's letters that the practice of writing was wide spread among the educated Romans of the Silver Age.

C. Oratory

The highest use of oratory, namely, to direct the supreme destinies of the state, as in the days of Cicero, had

1. VII 17-11
2. Lucretius 1-832
3. IV 18-1
4. IV 3-3

disappeared in the Silver Age. The emperor in the first century had supreme control. This is one reason for the emphasis on the formal literary style of oratory.

Pliny favors long speeches and we have one reference to his having delivered a speech for seven hours continuously.[1] He thought that long speeches were necessary in order to present the subject fully and also he favored length in speeches because of the pure enjoyment of them.

Audiences listened for hours at a time to causes and speeches, not for the reason that our people crowd courtrooms today; that is the reason of morbid curiosity and the outcome of the case, but audiences in those days listened out of love for literature. They liked to hear words well chosen and well spoken, and many people often listened to certain causes in which they had no interest except to hear a famous orator deliver his speech.

But, as we said in the explanation of Roman education, oratory through all the ages held an important place and we are not surprised to find a great deal of attention paid to it in the first century A. D. The career of a statesman and the career of an advocate were popular ones and these both necessitated training in public speaking.

Cato's definition of an orator --- "Orator est 'vir bonus dicendi peritus'!"[2] --- seems as apt in Pliny's day as it was in Cato's.

1. IV 16-2
2. Quintilian XII 1-1

1. Careful preparation of speeches

They realized that to speak effectively they must have well chosen words and so their speeches were written and rewritten with a great deal of care. Those were days of widespread knowledge, and the courts where they delivered their speeches were frequented by a very intelligent group of people.

To show how it was not uncommon for grown men to attend the lectures on oratory given by Quintilian and Nicetes, because such a genuine interest existed in oratory as such, Pliny speaks of the father of Julius Naso. Julius Naso is up for office and Pliny wants to praise him and he tells of how Naso's father used to go to Quintilian's lectures when Pliny as a student was attending them. "Erat non studiorum tantum, verum etiam studiosorum amantissimus, ac prope cotidie ad audiendos, quos tunc ego frequentabam, Quintilianum et Nicetem Sacerdotem ventitabat."[1]

Two amounting a conclusion from a single instance

To show the care that went into the preparation of a speech Pliny says --- "Ac primum, quae scripsi, mecum ipse pertracto; deinde duobus aut tribus lego; mox aliis trado adnotanda notasque eorum, si dubito, cum uno rursus aut altero pensito; novissime pluribus recito ac, si quid mihi credis, tunc acerrime emendo."[2]

Pliny writes a very sad letter bemoaning the decline of the court of the centumviri, where he says there are hired applauders and --- "Pudet referre, quae quam fracta pronun-

1. VI 6-3
2. VII 17-7

tiatione dicantur, quibus, quam teneris clamoribus, excipiantur."[1] And he concludes by saying --- "Sumus tamen solito rariores, quod initium est gradatim desinendi."[2] As a result of such practices he says he attends less frequently than formerly. But more optimism is expressed in the following letter --- "Gaude meo, gaude tuo, gaude etiam publico nomine; adhuc honor studiis durat."[3] And then he goes on to tell the incident of how he found the court of the centumviri very crowded with important spectators. Pliny's attitude toward oratory was typical among his associates, and skill in oratory was the mark of an educated and successful man.

Besides the works of Quintilian on Oratory, which were and still are considered among the best works of their kind, we find that Pliny, the Elder, according to his nephew, wrote --- "Studiosi tres (libri) in sex volumina propter amplitudinem divisi, quibus oratorem ab incunabulis instituit et perfecit."[4]

2. Audiences and their applause.

Pliny as well as his associates were acquainted with what we call the laws of psychology although they were not classified as such, for they recognized the importance of the audience to the extent that they were pleased with the applause of their audience. Pliny says --- "Aeschinem aiunt petentibus Rhodiis legisse orationem suam, deinde Demosthenis, summis utramque clamoribus."[5] Pliny is not surprised at the applause of these when he realizes how his own speech was

1. II 14-12
2. II 14-14
3. IV 16-1
4. III 5-5
5. IV 5-1

applauded: --- "Cum orationem meam proxime doctissimi homines hoc studio, hoc adsensu, hoc etiam labore per biduum audierint."[1]

That Pliny believes in the good will and intelligence of his hearers is evidenced by the following, taken from the incident about finding the courtroom crowded --- "Sunt, qui audiant, sunt qui legant, nos modo dignum aliquid auribus dignum chartis elaboremus."[2] In remarking about the crowd at the trial of Marius Priscus, in which Pliny and Tacitus represented the state, Pliny writes "----- et fama insitumque mortalibus studium magna et inusitata noscendi omnes undique exciverat."[3] Of his own audience Pliny says --- "Sed ego cum studium audientium tum iudicium mire probavi; animadverti enim, severissima quaeque vel maxime satisfacere."[4] Pliny believes that a critical audience can have a good effect on writers --- "Omnes enim, qui placendi causa scribunt, qualia placere viderint, scribent."[5]

a. People hired to applaud

The audiences gave their applause in recognition of good literature. The audience had a keen sense and was able to judge the quality of the speech. Pliny has no use for the situation that is growing up around him; namely, the habit of hiring people to applaud. "Primus hunc audiendi morem induxit Largius Licinus, hactenus tamen ut auditores corrogaret."[6] With this practice Pliny has no sympathy --- "Sequuntur auditores actoribus similes, conducti et redempti, manceps convenitur; in media basilica tam palam sportulae, quam in

1. IV 5-2
2. IV 16-3
3. II 11-10
4. III 18-8
5. III 18-10
6. II 14-9

triclinio dantur."[1] And again his scorn is shown --- "Opus est enim signo apud non intellegentes, ne audientes quidem; nam plerique non audiunt, nec ulli magis laudant."[2]

D. Pliny's own Reading and Writing

1. Pliny's life

As we review briefly the facts of Pliny's life, we shall realize that his entire education tended to emphasize literary pursuits. His life was a busy and prosperous one.

He was born in 62 A. D. at Comum in Northern Italy of a family of local consequence. When he was studying as a youth, Vespasian was the ruler, and when he reached young manhood and was looking for active participation in public affairs, Domitian was the ruler, and then in the later part of his life, Trajan was Emperor, and under him he held important positions of trust. His father died when he was very small and he was fortunate in having the guidance of his uncle Pliny, the Elder, and Verginius Rufus. Great pains were taken with Pliny's education and training. His own ability and industry, together with the best opportunities of learning which were available to him, ably fitted him to become an important figure in his times.

In his youth the most important happening was the eruption of Vesuvius when he was seventeen years old, and in which his uncle perished. He has preserved an account of this for us in two letters he wrote afterwards to Tacitus.

Pliny was destined for a senatorial career, the

1. II 14-4
2. II 14-6

climax of which was being consul and holding many important positions of trust open to men of consular rank. This career necessitated a thorough training in oratory and rhetoric. In the year 100 A. D. he became consul with his friend, Cornutus Tertullus. This was the occasion for his writing his oration of thanks to the Emperor Trajan. This oration is known as the Panegyric. It is very long but is valuable because of the facts it contains about Trajan's reign. During all this time Pliny was becoming a very successful advocate and his ability in speaking was unsurpassed.

Pliny was sent by Trajan as governor to Bithynia and Pontus. During this period he carried on an extensive correspondence with Trajan, and as this breaks off abruptly we do not know whether he died suddenly in Bithynia or was recalled. Other happenings establish the fact that he must have died before 115 A. D.

Pliny led a happy and useful life, and he had pleasant associations. He followed two avocations which he dearly loved --- trips into the country and literary pursuits. In many letters we find him expressing a wish to be in the country, away from the whirl of the city.

We know, from his own letters, that he wrote poetry but none of it has come down to us. We have his Panegyric and ten books of letters, nine books of general correspondence, and one of his correspondence with Trajan

2. His reading

Pliny had a keen love of literature and therefore found real enjoyment in reading. He enjoyed reading Greek as well as Latin, and even in describing the life at his Tuscan villa he says that for his stomach's sake after resting and walking --- "Mox orationem Graecam Latinamve clare et intente .... lego."[1] Pliny must have had a few favorite authors because in describing the rooms in his Laurentine villa he says --- "Parieti eius in bibliothecae speciem armarium insertum est, quod non legendos libros, sed lectitandos capit."[2] And again he says --- "Tu memineris sui cuiusque generis auctores diligenter eligere. Aiunt enim multum legendum esse, non multa. Qui sint hi, adeo notum probatumque est, ut demonstratione non egeat."[3]

a. His very real interest and pleasure in reading

Pliny's pleasure in literature and study is expressed in the following --- "Et gaudium mihi et solacium in letteris, nihilque tam laetum, quod his laetius, tam triste, quod non per has sit minus triste."[4] And he concludes --- "Porro ut ex studiis gaudium sic studia hilaritate proveniunt."[5]

These statements of Pliny remind us of his own favorite Cicero who says --- "Nam ceterae neque temporum sunt neque aetatum omnium neque locorum; at haec studia adulescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solacium praebent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur."[6]

1. IX 36-3
2. II 17-8
3. VII 9-15
4. VIII 19-1
5. VIII 19-2
6. Cicero - Pro Archia VII

b. Details of his reading (as shown by individual authors mentioned or quoted)

Pliny mentions either by quoting them or by referring to them a large number of authors both Greek and Roman. These authors are not all in one field of literary achievement, for he speaks of orators, historians, dramatists, and poets. This shows that Pliny must have been familiar with many authors and with authors in a variety of fields of literature. Pliny loved literature for its own sake and was an eager reader and had a keen appreciation of good writing.

Among the Roman prose writers Pliny mentions Cicero eight times. It is evident that Cicero, the famous orator of earlier years, was the literary figure for whom Pliny had great admiration.[1] Another Roman orator, Cato, the Younger, is mentioned twice. Among the Roman historians Pliny mentions Julius Caesar, Nepos, and Livy[2] each one. Pliny had read Lucretius and refers to him in one letter.[3]

Among the Roman poets Pliny makes eight quotations from Virgil,[4] the writer of the great national epic and the writer also of pastoral poetry and a treatise on agriculture. Seven of these quotations are from the Aeneid. In spite of Pliny's well known fondness for country life he quotes only once from the Georgics and not at all from the Eclogues. The elegiac poet Propertius was known to Pliny as is proven by two references to him.[5] Among other Roman verse writers he refers once to each of the following:-- Horace,[6] Catullus,[7]

1. I 5-12
2. VI 20-5
3. IV 18-2
4. III 7-8
5. IX 22-1; VI 15-2
6. IX 22-2
7. I 16-5

and Calvus.[1] And among his own contemporaries Pliny writes a letter grieving over the death of Martial who has come to be known as the greatest Roman writer of satirical epigrams.[2]

Among the Roman dramatists Plautus is mentioned twice by Pliny and Terence three times.[3]

Among the Greek writers of prose Pliny quotes Demosthenes,[4] the greatest Greek orator, in ten different places in his letters. He also refers once to the speeches of Pericles and twice to the discourses of Socrates,[5] which shows an acquaintance with Plato who reported the dialogues of Socrates. Among the Greek historians we find two references to Thucydides and one to Xenophon.

Among the Greek writers of Poetry, Homer[6, 7] holds the supreme place in Pliny's eyes, for he quotes him in fifteen different places.

Among the Greek dramatists Pliny shows that he is familiar with both old and new Greek comedy. Of the writers of old Greek comedy, he refers once to Aristophanes and once to Eupolis.[8] And of the new Greek comedy writers he refers once to Menander.[9] Among the Greek writers of tragedy Pliny quotes Euripides twice.

From the list of famous literary figures with whom Pliny was familiar we must certainly conclude that his love of literature led him to explore it in all its branches.

c. His uncle and his influence on Pliny's habits as a writer

It is small wonder that Pliny worked long and

1.	I	16-6	4.	IV	7-6	7.	I	20-17
2.	III	21-5	5.	III	12-1	8.	I	20-20
3.	I	16-6	6.	VIII	4-4	9.	VI	21-4

earnestly at his education when we learn what a prodigy of industry his uncle was.

Pliny writes a letter to Baebius Macer who has asked Pliny for a list of his uncle's writings, expressing pleasure that Baebius is interested in them. In this letter Pliny outlines his uncle's busy life,and the main idea of the letter is the industry his uncle showed and the idea he had of always making the most of his time during his fifty-six years. The word"studium" appears again and again in the letter, and we are led to believe that Pliny had always near him the example of a man who never tired of work and would have been restless and unhappy with leisure. Among Pliny, the Elder's, most important works were Natural History, Training of an Orator, History of Wars in Germany, and others, and as Pliny says --- "Hac intentione tot ista volumina peregit, electorumque commentarios centum sexaginta mihi reliquit, opisthographos quidem et minutissime scriptos; qua ratione multiplicatur hic numerus."[1]

We know that Pliny, the Elder, always made excerpts --- "Adnotabat excerpebatque. Nihil enim legit, quod non excerperet;"[2] And we find Pliny following the same course, as he describes what he was doing at the time of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius --- "Posco librum Titi Livii et quasi per otium lego, atque etiam, ut coeperam, excerpo."[3] When his uncle asked him to go in the galley toward Vesuvius with him, Pliny, the Younger, replied --- "Respondi studere me malle et

1. III 5-17
2. III 5-10
3. VI 20-5

forte ipse, quod scriberem, dederat."[1] That Pliny greatly admired his uncle there can be no doubt --- "Itaque soleo ridere, cum me quidam studiosum vocant, qui si comparer illi, sum desidiosissimus."[2] We know that Pliny must have gotten the habit of study and of making notes of books read from his uncle.

Another habit or desire he must have gotten from his uncle was the habit of going to the country to get leisure for writing. Of the Elder Pliny we read in his nephew's letter describing his life --- "In secessu solum balinei tempus studiis eximebatur."[3] And of himself, Pliny says, as he describes in a detailed fashion his Laurentine villa --- "In capite xysti deinceps cryptoporticus, horti diaeta est, amores mei, revera amores: ipse posui ----- Nam nec ipse meorum lusibus nec illi studiis meis obstrepunt."[4]

When asked by a friend to write a history and feeling favorably inclined to the idea, Pliny answers --- "Me vero ad hoc studium impellit domesticum quoque exemplum. Avunculus meus idemque per adoptionem pater historias, et quidem religiosissime scripsit."[5]

Still more from the Vesuvius letter proves that Pliny was a serious boy, intent on hard work --- "Profecto avunculo ipse reliquum tempus studiis (ideo enim remanseram) impendi."[6] Pliny seems always to have study on his mind, for he says in speaking of being burdened with affairs pertaining to renting his farms --- "Quibus ex causis precario studeo, studeo tamen;

1. VI 16-7
2. III 5-19
3. III 5-14
4. II 17-20
5. V 8-4
6. VI 20-2

nam et scribo aliquid et lego;"[1] Of study he says --- "Porro ut ex studiis gaudium sic studia, hilaritate proveniunt."[2]

Throughout Pliny's busy life there are evidences again and again of industrious habits staying with him that must have been formed when he was a boy being trained by his uncle.

3. His writing

When we see what keen enjoyment Pliny got from reading the writings of others, we are not surprised to find him writing. His prose has come down to us in his letters, and we know from his letters that he polished up his orations for publication and that he tried his hand at verse writing. His style is good and interesting. He is admittedly an imitator of Cicero and is like him in his fluency, but his diction and forms of expression are more like Tacitus and Quintilian, the leading prose writers of the Silver Age.

a. His opinion on earlier writers and their influence on him. (Cicero, etc.)

We judge that Pliny's appreciation of earlier writers was very keen, and he easily chose the best ones for his models. From our discussion of the special authors mentioned by Pliny we know that he was familiar with practically all the earlier writers of any literary standing, both Greek and Roman. Some of these earlier authors had more direct influence on Pliny's manner and way of writing than others, and Pliny's insight enabled him to choose the best ones to imitate.

1. VII 30-4
2. VIII 19-2

Cicero, of course, comes to our mind first as the earlier writer who influenced Pliny the most, for Pliny himself says --- "Est enim, inquam, mihi cum Cicerone aemulatio, nec sum contentus eloquentia saeculi nostri. --- Nam stultissimum credo, ad imitandum non optima quaeque proponere."[1] And again he says (showing that he wished to be like him in all ways) --- "Te quidem, ut scribis, ob hoc maxime delectat auguratus meus, quod M. Tullius augur fuit."[2] Pliny was ever ready to lend a helping hand to young advocates and writers, and possibly here is partly the reason --- " ----- rogas etiam, ut aliquid subsecivi temporis studiis meis subtraham, impertiam tuis, adicis M. Tullium mira benignitate poetarum ingenia fovisse."[3]

In answer to the statement that some one might say that there is a wide difference between orators and poets, Pliny declares --- "Quasi vero M. Tullius minus audeat, quamquam hunc omitto; neque enim ambigi puto."[4] When Pliny in the letter to Tacitus asking to be included in his history writes --- "Haec utcunque se habent, notiora, clariora, maiora tu facies; quamquam non exigo, ut excedas actae rei modum,"[5] it is thought that he had Cicero in mind when Cicero wrote to Lucceius asking him to write a book of his (Cicero's) exploits, and suggesting that he use more than the truth. Pliny has evidently profited by Cicero's obvious weakness because he does not ask for facts to be put in the history that did not actually happen. Pliny went so far in imitating Cicero that he af-

1. I 5-11
2. IV 8-4
3. III 15-1
4. IX 26-8
5. VII 33-10

fected to be a poor business man, partly because men interested in letters were supposed to be, and which is more the case, because he knew that Cicero was a poor business man. And to the contrary we know that Pliny was probably a very good manager of his own affairs, still he says --- "----- rationes legebam invitus et cursim (aliis enim chartis, aliis sum litteris initiatus)."[1]

In writing to Tacitus of his part at the time of the eruption of Vesuvius, Pliny quotes Virgil --- "Quamquam animus meminisse horret; Incipiam."[2, 3]

We think that Pliny must have approved of, and been influenced by, the law of poetry writing laid down by Catullus of whom he says --- "Scimus alioqui huius opusculi illam esse verissimam legem, quam Catullus expressit. 'Nam castum esse decet pium poetam ipsum, versiculos nihil necesse est, qui tunc denique habent salem et leporum, si sunt molliculi et parum pudici'."[4]

We have direct proof of Pliny's admiration for Demosthenes because in a letter to Genitor who has praised a work of Pliny and compared it to an oration by Demosthenes, he writes --- "Quam sane, cum componerem illos, habui in manibus."[5] Demosthenes as well as Cicero had a marked influence on his oratory, and in speaking of distinguishing between extravagance and grandeur he says --- "Sed Demosthenes ipse, ille norma oratoris et regula, num se cohibet et comprimit."[6] He also writes --- "Temptavi enim imitari

1.	V	14-8	4.	IV	14-5
2.	Aeneid	II-12	5.	VII	30-5
3.	VI	20-1	6.	IX	26-8

Demosthenem semper tuum, Calvum nuper meum dumtaxat figuris orationis."[1]

The very fact that we find Homer quoted fifteen times proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that Pliny knew Homer's writings well and must have been influenced by them.

b. Pliny seeks seclusion

The wealthy and literary Romans of Pliny's day seemed to have a great desire to be in the country and to enjoy the seclusion that the country offered. Pliny gives voice to this idea in many letters.

Pliny had country villas in several different places but his Laurentine villa which was only a few miles from Rome seems to have been his favorite and the one where he went for inspiration. In several letters he pays tribute to this special villa as the place for study and inspiration. In one particular season the money return from most of his villas was small. But he writes to Julius Naso in a charming letter urging him to buy a farm on the coast if he wants an ever-productive one, and he says --- " ----- solum mihi Laurentinum meum in reditu ----- Ibi enim plurimum scribo nec agrum, quem non habeo, sed ipsum me studiis excolo: ac iam possum tibi ut aliis in locis horreum plenum sic ibi scrinium ostendere."[2] As he compares a day in the city with one in the country, he writes to Minicius Fundanus --- "Quot dies quam frigidis rebus absumpsi! Quod evenit mihi, postquam in Laurentino meo aut lego aliquid aut scribo -----; nulla spe,

1. I 2-2
2. IV 6-1

nullo timore sollicitor, nullis rumoribus inquietor, mecum tantum et cum libellis loquor. O rectam sinceramque vitam!--- Proinde tu quoque strepitum istum inanemque discursum et multum ineptos labores, ut primum fuerit occasio, relinque teque studiis vel otio trade."[1] In still another letter when he has been detained in Rome by the illness of a friend but things look more favorable, he writes --- "Qua liberatus Laurentinum meum, hoc est libellos et pugillares studiosumque otium, repetam."[2]

We have a feeling that Pliny enjoyed the country more because of the leisure it offered for literary pursuits than because of the sports it offered, such as hunting. In speaking of his Tuscan villa we find this statement --- "Ego in Tuscis et venor et studeo, quae interdum alternis, interdum simul facio, nec tamen adhuc possum pronuntiare, utrum sit difficilius capere aliquid, an scribere."[3] And to Tacitus he writes --- "Ad retia sedebam; erat in proximo non venabulum aut lancea, sed stilus et pugillares; meditabar aliquid enotabamque, ut, si manus vacuas, plenas tamen ceras reportarem."[4] After describing in detail his day in the summer at his Tuscan villa, he writes to Fuscus --- "Venor aliquando, sed non sine pugillaribus, ut, quamvis nihil ceperim, non nihil referam."[5] In another letter speaking of his Tuscan villa, Pliny writes --- "Nam studiis animum, venatu corpus exerceo."[6] We wonder what Pliny would think of the idle amusements of our world today after he writes

1. I 9-3
2. I 22-11
3. V 18-2
4. I 6-1
5. IX 36-6
6. V 6-45

such a strong letter denouncing chariot races and finishes by saying --- "Ac per hos dies libentissime otium meum in litteris colloco, quos alii otiosissimis occupationibus perdunt."[1]

Pliny's idea of a perfect old age is in accord with his great liking for the country. He gets his idea from Spurinna, a wise and youthful man at the age of seventy-eight, whom he visited --- "Me autem ut certus siderum cursus ita vita hominum disposita delectat, senum praesertim."[2] To briefly outline some of the more important pursuits of Spurinna's day --- "Mane lectulo continetur --- ambulat milia passuum tria --- liber legitur --- considit --- Peractis septem milibus passuum iterum ambulat mille, iterum residet vel se cubiculo ac stilo reddit --- movetur pila --- Lotus accubat --- Adponitur cena."[3] And Pliny concludes --- "Hanc ego vitam voto et cognitatione praesumo ingressurus avidissime, ut primum ratio aetatis receptui canere permiserit."[4]

c. Pliny's oratory

In Pliny's day the only way to practical success was through the career of an orator. So his career in politics and at the bar began early. As we have already said in our summary of Roman education, the education of a gentleman was to train him to be a good public speaker. A liberal education and the study of rhetoric were practically one.

Pliny's first great success was when, as he says --- "Susceperam causam Juni Pastoris, --- Et eram acturus adules-

1. IX 6-4
2. III 1-2
3. III 1-1 through 4
4. III 1-11

centulus adhuc, eram in quadruplici iudicio, eram contra potentissimos civitatis atque etiam Caesaris amicos; --- Prospere cessit, atque adeo illa actio mihi aures hominum, illa ianuam famae patefecit."[1] Pliny's advance was greatly helped by Verginius Rufus who --- "Sic candidatum me suffragio ornavit."[2] Pliny showed good judgment, for while he was tribune and praetor he did not actively practice as an advocate --- "Ipse cum tribunus essem, erraverim fortasse, qui me aliquid putavi, sed, tamquam essem, abstinui causis agendis."[3] He also tells us that he, during all his practice at the bar, refrained from taking any fees, rewards, or friendly presents, and his own words are --- "Quam me iuvat, quod in causis agendis non modo pactione, dono, munere, verum etiam xeniis semper abstinui."[4]

Pliny's early career as an advocate was in the court of the centumviri and it, at Pliny's time, was chiefly concerned with matters of inheritance. In later years he writes of being over-worked with cases in this court, and throughout his letters there are many references to it --- "Verum opinaris; distringor centumviralibus causis, quae me exercent magis quam delectant."[5] The climax of his career as an advocate came when he took an important part in the state trials when the provincial governors were arraigned before the senate for maladministration. For Africa he was engaged in the prosecution of Marius Priscus and for Boetia in the prosecution of Baebius Massa and Caecilius Classicus. Baetica

1. I 18-3
2. II 1-8
3. I 23-2
4. V 13-8
5. II 14-1

Among others, later he was engaged in the prosecution of two ex-governors of Bithynia, Julius Bassus and Varenus Rufus. It is thought that his knowledge of Bithynia, gained through the preparation of this case, later led Trajan to send him to Bithynia as governor.

His knowledge of oratory was widely recognized among advocates, and probably young advocates were as eager to be taken on by him as he was interested in helping them --- "Peto atque etiam paciscor, ut simul agat Cremutius Ruso. Solitum hoc mihi et iam in pluribus claris adulescentibus factitatum. Nam mire concupisco bonos iuvenes ostendere foro, adsignare famae."[1] He speaks of a conversation with a famous old lady, saying --- "Audivi ipsam, cum mihi commendaret nepotis sui studia."[2]

1. The effort he put into it

More than once his letters record the anxious care which he and his friends bestowed on the elaboration of his orations. Some students assign to him the florid and luxuriant type of oratory, but we believe he made a fine distinction between extravagance and grandeur in his style.

In many letters we find references to his rewriting an oration, or to his sending it to a friend for criticism. He wanted to make his orations fine literary productions. He asks Arrianus --- " ----- librum, quem prioribus epistulis promiseram, exhibeo. Hunc rogo ex consuetudine tua et legas et emendas;"[3] As he speaks of writing and of his contemporary,

1. VI 23-2
2. VII 24-5
3. I 2-1

Pompeius Saturninus, he says --- "Est ergo mecum per diem totum; eundem, antequam scribam, eundem, - etiam cum remittor, non tanquam eundem lego."[1] Of writing one speech he says --- "Adnisi certe sumus, ut quamlibet diversa genera lectorum per plures dicendi species teneremus."[2] Of this same speech which he is asking a friend to criticise he says --- "Exhibui tibi, non tamen totam; adhuc enim pars eius perpolitur."[3] To show that Pliny had a fine power of discrimination we quote from a letter of his to Atrius --- "Diligentiam tuam in retractandis operibus valde probo. Est tamen aliquis modus, primum quod nimia cura deterit magis quam emendat;-"[4]

About a postponed case he writes --- "Dimittuntur centumviri, eximitur dies, me gaudente, qui numquam ita paratus sum, ut non mora laeter."[5] We think the above quotation shows quite a human touch in Pliny, for after all who is not pleased at an extension of time?

He submits what he thinks is his best speech to his friend for judgment. "----- re vera, ut inter meas pulchram; nam mihi satis est certare mecum."[6] Pliny and Tacitus exchanged speeches for criticism. Pliny writes to Tacitus --- "Librum tuum legi et, quam diligentissime potui, adnotavi, quae commutanda, quae eximenda arbitrarer. Nunc a te librum meum cum adnotationibus tuis exspecto."[7] In speaking of revising his speeches Pliny says --- "Nec persuadere mihi possum non et cum multis et saepe tractandum;-"[8]

Pliny was accustomed to recite his speeches to his

1. I 16-7
2. II 5-6
3. II 5-1
4. IX 35-2
5. V 9-2
6. VI 33-2
7. VII 20-1
8. VII 17-15

friends, and when criticised for this practice, he answers --- "Sua cuique ratio recitandi; mihi, quod saepe iam dixi, ut, si quid me fugit, ut certe fugit, admonear."[1]

2. His fondness for long speeches

There is no doubt that Pliny believed that long speeches were more effective in proving the orator's point to his audience. In a letter to Cornelius Tacitus, Pliny is telling of frequent debates he has with a learned friend of his who admires conciseness in the eloquence of the bar. Pliny, in differing with him, says that to omit material or only touch lightly those points which should be repeatedly driven home is to weaken the cause undertaken --- "Nam plerisque longiore tractu vis quaedam et pondus accedit, utque corpori ferrum sic oratio animo non ictu magis quam mora inprimitur."[2] Pliny goes on to say, in a good composition there is much value and the more there is of it the better, and this is true in statues, in pictures, and in nature. "Idem orationibus evenit, quin etiam voluminibus ipsis auctoritatem quandem et pulchritudinem adicit magnitudo."[3] Pliny admits that there is a middle course that is to be desired. But that authors err as greatly on the side of being too barren as well as being too wordy is a well-known fact, and to him the fault of being too wordy is to be desired about the fault of being too barren. He quotes the comic writer Eupolis who says that Pericles speaks straight and persuasion is present and his eloquence leaves a sting behind. Pliny makes the

1. VII 17-1
2. I 20-3
3. I 20-5

point that to delight, persuade, and leave a sting in the minds of his audience requires time, great breadth of language and depth of thought and expression, and all of these were found in Pericles. Pliny's delightful humor and keen insight is shown in this letter where he says that short harangues are greatly admired but, by whom, he asks, and he hastens to answer his own question by the brief but pointed retort --- by the indolent --- "Ad est gratior multis actio brevis! Est, sed inertibus, quorum delicias desidiamque quasi iudicium respicere ridiculum est."[1] Pliny concludes by saying that he hopes that Tacitus will agree with him, and here again we find evidence of the great respect Pliny had for Tacitus.

Pliny from his own experience makes some very wise statements regarding orators and oratory --- "Omnibus ergo dandum est aliquid, quod teneant, quod agnoscant."[2] Also, "Nam plerisque longiore tractu vis quaedam et pondus accedit, utque corpori ferrum sic oratio animo non ictu magis quam mora inprimitur."[3] And, "Non enim amputata oratio et abscisa, sed lata magnifica et excelsa tonat, fulgurat, omnia denique perturbat ac miscet."[4]

3. His delight at having it applauded

After he put such effort into writing his speeches it is only natural that Pliny got great satisfaction and pleasure from winning approval for them. To Geminus Pliny writes --- "Bibliopolas Lugduni esse non putabam, ac tanto libentius ex litteris tuis cognovi venditari libellos meos, quibus pere-

1. I 20-23
2. I 20-13
3. I 20-3
4. I 20-19

gre manere gratiam, quam in urbe collegerint, delector."[1] And to Sabinus he writes --- "Qua intentione, quo studio, qua denique memoria legeris libellos meos, epistula tua ostendit."[2]

Pliny is writing to Arriamus describing the scene in the senate when the case of Marius Priscus came up --- "Utcumque tamen animum cogitationemque collegi, coepi dicere non minore audientium adsensu quam sollicitudine mea. Dixi horis paene quinque."[3] This happening in the court of the centumviri probably gave Pliny a great deal of satisfaction --- "Proxime cum dicturus apud centumviros essem, adeundi mihi locus nisi a tribunali, nisi per ipsos iudices non fuit; tanta stipatione cetera tenebantur. ---- adulescens ---- sola velatus toga perstitit et quidem horis septem. Nam tam diu dixi magno cum labore, sed maiore cum fructu."[4] But the following happening gave him still more pleasure --- "Frequenter agenti mihi evenit, ut centumviri, cum diu se intra iudicum auctoritatem gravitatemque tenuissent, omnes repente quasi victi coactique consurgerent laudarentque; frequenter e senatu famam, qualem maxime optaveram rettuli."[5]

We feel that the above quotations are enough to convince the reader that Pliny was very human and enjoyed praise as a reward for his endeavors. His wife, too, enjoyed having his speeches applauded --- "Disponit, qui nuntient sibi, quem adsensum, quos clamores excitarim, quem eventum iudicii tulerim."[6]

1. IX 11-2
2. IX 18-1
3. II 11-14
4. IV 16-1
5. IX 23-1
6. IV 19-3

d. His verses

From all accounts of Pliny's life, as well as from his letters, we learn that he tried his hand at writing verses and rather seriously, too. In more than one letter we find mention of his hendecasyllabics, but he did not seem to have the quality of a poet and we do not regret that his poems have not survived the ages. Pliny's powers were, no doubt, as good as his model Cicero's and were the subject of much anxious thought on his part --- "Quod ego interdum versibus ludo."[1]

He has written poetry for the following reasons he says --- "Numquam a poetice (altius enim repetam) alienus fui ----- coepi reputare maximos oratores hoc studii genus et in oblectationibus habuisse et in laude posuisse -----. Postremo placuit exemplo multorum unum separatim hendecasyllaborum volumen absolvere, nec paenitet."[2] Pliny seemed always to be holding himself up to a standard of accomplishment; he says about life in the country --- " ----, neminem ipse reprehendo, nisi tamen me, cum parum commode scribo."[3] Pliny explains why he has tried several kinds of writing --- "Ut satius est unum aliquid insigniter facere quam plurima mediocriter, ita plurima mediocriter, si non possis unum aliquid insigniter. Quod intuens ego variis me studiorum generibus nulli satis confisus experior."[4]

In his day Pliny attained quite an amount of success as a poet, judging from what he tells us of his readings --- "Liber fuit et opusculis varius et metris. ----- Recitavi

1. IV 27-3
2. VII 4-2
3. I 9-5
4. IX 29-1

biduo. Hoc adsensus audientium exegit. ----- Lego enim omnia, ut omnia emendem."[1] Pliny wrote several different kinds of verse. Pliny wrote to Paternus --- "Accipies cum hac epistula hendecasyllabos nostros, quibus nos in vehiculo, in baineo, inter cenam oblectamus otium temporis."[2] Arrius Antoninus sent Pliny some Greek verses he had written and Pliny put them into Latin verses, but he says they are inferior for the following reason --- "Accidit hoc primum imbecillitate ingenii mei."[3] From the country he writes --- "Devehimus tamen pro novo musto novos versiculos tibique iucundissime exigenti, ut primum videbuntur defervisse, mittemus."[4] Pliny seems a little pround of the freedom he uses in his poetry writing --- "Facio non numquam versiculos severos parum."[5]

The following incidents which are recorded in his letters are of interest in our consideration of Pliny's verse writing. In explaining to a friend who has praised his verses and has asked for more, he writes --- "----- quo finito aliquid earundem Carmenarum in istum benignissimum sinum mittam."[6] We know from the following that his wife, Calpurnia, liked his verses --- "Versus quidem meos cantat etiam formatque cithara non artifice aliquo docente, sed amore, qui magister est optimus."[7] We are inclined to pity poor Pliny in the following letter and wonder what advice Tranquillus gave him --- "Explica aestum meum. Audio me male legere, dumtaxat versus; orationes enim commodius, sed tanto minus versus."[8] We learn from his own letter that Pliny greatly approved of the

1.	VIII	21-4	3.	IV	18-1	6.	IX	25-3
2.	IV	14-2	4.	IX	16-2	7.	IV	19-4
			5.	V	3-2	8.	IX	34-1

poet Augurinus and we are inclined to think that perhaps he was flattered by the epigram which Augurinus wrote about him and especially this line --- "unus Plinius est mihi priores;"[1]

II. Writers

A. Pliny's relations with authors well-known to us

Pliny lived during the reign of several emperors and had many important and distinguished friends, among whom were several writers. His letters reveal in the court circle itself, a society high-minded, refined, and virtuous. Pliny was a type of the finest gentleman of today, in delicacy of feeling, sensitive honor, genial and thoughtful courtesy. His relationship with some of the authors of his day, as shown in his letters, gives us pleasing glimpses of both Pliny and his friends.

1. Tacitus

Among all his friends and acquaintances Pliny held Tacitus in the highest esteem and honor. In fifteen different letters of Pliny we find either references to Tacitus or the letter itself addressed to Tacitus. We know the year in which Pliny was born from the letter which he writes, years later, to Tacitus about the eruption of Vesuvius which he said happened when he was in his eighteenth year.[2] Another letter which Pliny addresses to Tacitus is very valuable to us because it helps us to determine the age of Tacitus in relation to Pliny and so helps us to determine the year in which Tacitus was born. In this letter he says --- "Erit rarum et insigne

1. IV 27-4
2. VI 20-5

duos homines aetate, dignitate propemodum aequales, non nullius in litteris nominis (cogor enim de te quoque parcius dicere, quia de me simul dico.) alterum alterius studia fovisse. Equidem adulescentulus, cum iam tu fama gloriaque floreres, te sequi, tibi ----- 'longo sed proximus intervallo'[1] et esse et haberi concupiscebam."[2]

The above quotation also shows us that Pliny's estimate of the literary ability of Tacitus was great. To Tacitus, who has asked him for an account of his uncle, the elder Pliny's death, he readily answers and shows his great admiration for the literary ability of Tacitus by saying --- "Multum tamen perpetuitati eius scriptorum tuorum aeternitas addet."[3] In another letter Pliny writes to Tacitus --- "Auguror nec me fallit augurium historias tuas immortales futuras: quo magis illis (ingenue fatebor) inseri cupio."[4] And then Pliny goes on to tell an involved incident in which he figures and which he hopes Tacitus will put into the history.

Pliny's regard for Tacitus is so great that he is delighted if their names are mentioned together. In one letter he tells the incident about Tacitus and the stranger. When Tacitus was sitting next to a Roman knight at the Circensian games and after much discourse on learned subjects the knight asked if Tacitus was an Italian or a provincial --- "se respondisse: Nosti me et quidem ex studiis. Ad hoc illum - Tacitus es an Plinius?"[5] Later on in this same letter

1. Aeneid V-320
2. VII 20-3
3. VI 16-2
4. VII 33-1
5. IX 23-3

Pliny says, knowing his friend will understand --- "Ego vero et gaudeo et gaudere me dico."[1]

The friendship between Pliny and Tacitus was so great that they exchanged their works for criticism. About this Pliny writes --- "Librum tuum legi et, quam diligentissime potui, adnotavi, quae commutanda, quae eximenda arbitrarer. ---- Nunc a te librum meum cum adnotationibus tuis exspecto. O iucundas, o pulchras vices! Quam me delectat, quod, si qua posteris cura nostri, usquequaque narrabitur, qua concordia, simplicitate, fide vixerimus!"[2] In another letter Pliny writes --- "Neque ut magistro magister neque ut discipulo discipulus (sic enim scribis), sed ut discipulo magister (nam tu magister, ego contra; atque adeo tu in scholam revocas, ego adhuc Saturnalia extendo) librum misisti."[3]

2. Quintilian

Another famous man of Pliny's time and one worthy of his admiration and respect was Quintilian. Quintilian, known as the most famous rhetorician of his time and of all times, was Pliny's teacher and was held in great respect by Pliny. Quintilian because of his wise and very modern theories of education and learning stands out as one of the great educators of all times. All the contemporaries of Quintilian have nothing to say but good of him. Quintilian's great work, the Institutio Oratoria, appeared about 93 A. D. and has ever since maintained the position of being the standard treatise on the theory and practice of Latin oratory.

1. IX 23-5
2. VII 20-1
3. VIII 7-1

In writing to Fundanus Pliny says that the father of Julius Naso, a candidate for office, was not only a devoted admirer of oratory but of those who cultivated it --- " ---- ac prope cotidie ad audiendos, quos tunc ego frequentabam, Quintilianum et Niceten Sacerdotem ventitabat."[1] Quintilian tells us a story of his teacher, Domitius Afer of Nimes, which Pliny has preserved for us. It seems that Domitius Afer was pleading one day before the centumviral court in a serious manner, and he was interrupted by an unusual noise; when the noise stopped, he began again. He was interrupted a second time, and then a third. When he asked who was interrupting him, he was told a certain Licinius and straightway --- "Centumviri, inquit, hoc artificium periit."[2] In each reference to Quintilian, who was the schoolmaster who became consul, Pliny gives his friend praise and shows respect for him.

A bad omission here is VI.32, P.'s letter to Quint. about his contribution to the dowry of Q's daughter

3. Martial

Another man of importance of this period and one of Pliny's friends was Martial, who is known as the world's epigrammatist. He was patronized by the Emperor and by wealthy men, among whom was Pliny. His writings portrayed the Roman Empire at the turn of the troubled time, and for this they are important. He wrote fifteen books of poems, containing six hundred numbers. His two faults, according to our world today, are what seem to be overdone; his obsequiousness and his obscenity. But only one-fifth of these writings are really offensive and without doubt some of that sort of writing was

1. VI 6-3
2. II 14-11

necessary for him to gain favor. He enjoyed Pliny's friendship and Pliny would not have countenanced a man of questionable character.

In a letter to Cornelius Priscus about Martial's death, Pliny says --- "Audio Valerium Martialem decessisse et moleste fero. Erat homo ingeniosus, acutus, acer, et qui plurimum in scribendo et salis haberet et fellis nec candoris minus."[1] Pliny, after giving him this lavish praise, says that when Martial left Rome he (Pliny) gave him a present of money enough for his expenses. He did this not only as a mark of friendship, but in return for a little poem Martial had written about Pliny. Pliny then quotes the poem from memory, which shows that he must have been pleased with it and particularly with the part that says he (Pliny) will rival Cicero; for Cicero was ever before Pliny in his mind as his master. "Hoc, quod saecula posterique possint Arpinis quoque comparare chartis."[2] Martial's fame rendered Pliny's precaution of incorporating his epigram into his letter unnecessary.

4. Suetonius

Among Pliny's contemporaries also was Suetonius, who wrote The Lives of the Twelve Caesars, and is referred to or addressed by Pliny in five different letters. Pliny showed him favor and friendship by procuring for him the dignity of military tribune, which by Suetonius' own desire was transferred to another. As private secretary to the Emperor

1. III 21-1
2. III 21-5

Hadrian he probably had access to the state archives and heard traditional stories about court life. Where the writings of Tacitus have been lost, Suetonius becomes our chief authority for the lives of the Caesars from Julius to Domitian. Our pleasantest glimpses of Suetonius come from Pliny, the court letter writer. In one place we find Pliny writing to tell Trajan that his friend Suetonius is an upright and learned gentleman whom folk often desire to remember in their wills.

We find Pliny always in the role of urging his friends to write and publish their writings. In a letter to Suetonius he urges him to publish the hendecasyllabic verses he has been working on and he concludes --- "Perfectum opus absolutumque est nec iam splendescit lima sed atteritur. Patere me videre titulum tuum; patere audire describi, legi, venire volumina Tranquilli mei."[1]

Pliny writes a letter to Suetonius who has evidently asked his aid in getting a cause he has to plead postponed for a while because a dream has warned him that success will not attend him at the present time. The great superstition of the Romans is clearly displayed by Pliny who quotes the Illiad 1-63 by saying that dreams descend from Jove and must be considered, and he therefore agrees to help his friend and says --- "Ego aliquam stropham inveniam agamque causam tuam, ut ipsam agere tu, cum voles, possis."[2] Pliny writes to Baebius to ask him to intercede with a friend who owns a farm

1. V 10-3
2. I 18-6

such as Pliny's friend Suetonius is desiring to buy. Pliny says, in describing the situation to Baebius, after having said that a reasonable price and a situation near Rome and good roads are most desirable --- "Scholasticis porro dominus, ut hic est, sufficit abunde tantum soli, ut relevare caput, reficere oculos, reptare per limitem unamque semitam terere omnesque viticulas suas nosse et numerare arbusculas possint."[1]

To show that there was an even exchange of friendship and advice giving between Pliny and Suetonius, we find Pliny saying that he has been told and he himself knows that he reads verses poorly, and he asks his friend whether it were better for him to read them himself poorly or to hire a good reader, who cannot write himself, to read his verses for him. By way of concluding the letter he asks --- "Iterum dicam, explica aestum meum vereque rescribe, num sit melius pessime legere quam ista vel non facere vel facere."[2]

5. Silius Italicus

Another important person whom Pliny knew was Silius Italicus who was a Latin poet mentioned by Martial as well as by Pliny. He was rich and greatly interested in literature, art, and philosophy. He is known best for his work called Punica or Bellum Punicum, an artificial, cumbersome epic in seventeen books and patriotically Roman in subject matter. It is the longest Roman epic poem known and shows epic poetry at its worst. He seems to lack inspiration, originality, and judgment. All the forms of the epic are put in, and it be-

1. I 24-4
2. IX 34-2

comes very boresome, and is long drawn out. Possibly he would have been better suited to write prose. He was Martial's patron and was praised by him, but even Pliny who has a laudatory remark for everyone but Marcus Aquilus Regulus says of Silius Italicus that he had industry rather than genius.

In a letter to Caninius Rufus, Pliny writes, after he has just learned that Silius Italicus has starved himself to death --- " ----- salutabatur, colebatur multumque in lectulo iacens cubiculo semper non ex fortuna frequenti doctissimis sermonibus dies transigebat, cum a scribendo vacaret. Scribebat carmina maiore cura quam ingenio, non numquam iudicia hominum recitationibus experiebatur.

Pliny mentions the villas which Silius owned and then he speaks of their furnishings and does not fail to make mention of Virgil's portrait and says --- "Multum ubique librorum, multum statuarum, multum imaginum, quas non habebat modo, verum etiam venerabatur, Vergili ante omnes, cuius natalem religiosius quam suum celebrabat. ----- "[2] It was a common practice among the Romans of the first century to celebrate the birthdays of famous people.

6. Pliny, the Elder

Gaius Plinius Secundus who lived from 23 to 79 A. D. and is always spoken of as the Elder Pliny was the uncle of Pliny, the Younger. The younger Pliny, because of his father's death when he was a small child, was left to the guardianship

1. III 7-4
2. III 7-8

of Verginius Rufus and the supervision of his learned uncle, the elder Pliny. Pliny, the Elder, the brother of his mother, adopted Pliny when he was very young. Pliny, the Elder, was the most learned man and chief writer of his generation and also a conscientious and energetic official. He is mentioned by Pliny in five different letters, and in no letter do we find a reference to his father which leads us to believe that Pliny's father died when Pliny was so young that he did not remember him. He was procurator in Spain in 71 A. D. when he heard of the death of his brother-in-law and of his being intrusted with the guardianship of the young Pliny, and on his return in 73 A. D. he adopted his nephew. When he died in 79 A. D. he left his nephew his sole heir, adopting him by will, and then Pliny, according to custom, took his adoptive father's name and became known as C. Plinius Caecilius Secundus.

Consistent? Pliny Jr. was born in 62

While in the army he wrote De Iaculatione Equestri and began a history of the Germanic Wars which he later finished in twenty books. He later retired to his native place, and write his Studiosi tres, which is a treatise of three books on the training of a young orator from the nursery to his entrance into public life; supposedly intended to guide in the education of his nephew. Pliny, the Elder, collected a vast amount of material, and he was an eager and thorough student and a tireless worker. In 77 A. D. he published his great work Historia Naturalis, the thirty-seven

books of which have survived, although most of his works have been destroyed. This work is a great example and monument of industry and research and most valuable in supplying us with details on a great variety of subjects about which we have no other source of information. Mackail calls it a "priceless storehouse of information on every branch of natural science as known to the ancient world."

At the time of the eruption of Vesuvius, which buried Herculaneum and Pompeii in 79 A. D. he was stationed near Misenum in command of the Roman fleet. He had a very scientific mind, and with the first news of the eruption he set out for Sabiae to get a nearer view of the phenomenon and he was suffocated by the vapors there. As his companions did not perish it is thought that his physical condition, which was weakened by asthma, was not able to resist the vapors from the eruption and also the exertion, demanded to excape the onrushing lava and ashes, weakened him, too. The description of the way he met his death is found in a letter which Pliny wrote to Tacitus many years later. "Deinde flammae flammarumque praenuntius odor sulfuris alios in fugam vertunt, excitant illum. Innitens servulis duobus assurrexit et statim concidit, ut ego colligo,crassiore caligine spiritu obstructo clausoque stomacho, qui illi natura invalidus et angustus et frequenter interaestuans erat."[1]

To prove what a tireless worker his uncle was Pliny tells this incident to his friend Macer --- "Repeto me

1. VI 16-18

correptum ab eo, cur ambularem. 'Poteras,' inquit, 'has horas non perdere': nam perire omne tempus arbitrabatur, quod studiis non impertiretur."[1] In writing to Baebius Macer about his uncle's many accomplishments, after naming all the writings his uncle completed, Pliny says with great respect---"Miraris quod tot volumina multaque in his tam scrupulosa homo occupatus absolverit, magis miraberis, si scieris illum aliquandiu causas actitasse, decessisse anno sexto et quinquagensimo, medium tempus distentum impeditumque qua officiis maximis qua amicitia principum egisse. Sed erat acre ingenium,incredibile studium, summa vigilantia."[2]

When asked by a friend to write a history Pliny answers that he has always inclined toward writing one and says it is no small wonder. "Me vero ad hoc studium impellit domesticum quoque exemplum. Avunculus meus idemque per adoptionem pater historias, et quidem religiosissime scripsit. Invenio autem apud sapientes honestissimum esse maiorum vestigia sequi, si modo recto itinere praecesserint."[3]

7. Frontinus

Mention must be made here of Frontinus who held several important political positions, one of the most important was curator aquarum, water commissioner. There are several works attributed to him but only two are considered genuinely his, namely, the Strategematica, a treatise in three books on the art of war; and the De Aquis Urbis Romae, in two books. This last one mentioned is a very technical

1. III 5-16
2. III 5-7
3. V 8-4

and important account of the Roman aquaducts and the marvelous water supply of that ancient city.

Pliny says in speaking of the fact that he has been appointed Augur, to Maturus Arrianus--- "Mihi vero etiam illud gratulatione dignum videtur, quod successi Julio Frontino, principi viro, qui me nominationis die per hos continuos annos inter sacerdotes nominabat tamquam in locum suum cooptaret; quod nunc eventus ita comprobavit, ut non fortuitum videretur."[1]

In a letter to Russo, Pliny is discussing Russo's criticism of Verginius Rufus because he left lines to be inscribed on his tomb and "addis etiam melius rectiusque Frontinum, quod vetuerit omnino monumentum sibi fieri --."[2] Pliny answers --- "Utrumque dilexi miratus sum magis, quem tu reprehendis."[3] Pliny goes on to say that Frontinus' reason displayed more vanity than Verginius Rufus. These are the words of Frontinus quoted in this letter by Pliny ---"'Impensa monumenti supervacua est; memoria nostri durabit, si vita meruimus.'"[4]

B. Well known authors of his time not mentioned by Pliny

1. Juvenal

We find it difficult to explain why there is no letter written to or no mention of Juvenal by Pliny. Surely Juvenal was one of the most important figures of his times and he must have been well known by Pliny. He is important as a depictor of morals and manners and is therefore important

1. IV 8-3
2. IX 19-1
3. IX 19-2
4. IX 19-6

to a student of history. Nowhere, not even in the histories of Tacitus, do we find so distinct a picture of the seething tumult of that complex Roman civilization that was rapidly moving to its destruction. The main source of Juvenal's power is his directness. Of his sixteen satires English readers know the tenth satire the best through Dr. Johnson's imitation called The Vanity of Human Wishes. Some of his satires rank among the masterpieces of literature.

2. Statius

Another important man of the Silver Age not mentioned by Pliny was Statius. He was an epic, lyric, and dramatic poet. Statius placed his hopes for eternal fame on his epic, the tragic story of Thebes which took him a long while to write. This epic is called Thebiad and is plainly rebuilt from Greek materials but follows the track of the Aeneid although it is very far afield. In the twelve long books of this epic no prominent incident holds our attention and no stately or pathetic figure dominates the scene. One commentator has said that Statius is great because of his little poems which are real poetry and contain true local color and can be read with especial enjoyment when one is in Italy. These small poems are called Silvae and there are thirty-two of them. The Thebiad by Statius has been translated several times into English verse but the Silvae have been undeservedly neglected.

In discussing these various authors the writer, in spite of warning, has left in a great deal of matter that might belong in a history of Latin literature but is not relevant here.

3. Valerius Flaccus

Flaccus is supposed to have died before 90 A. D. He was an epic writer who wrote the Argonautica, an epic poem on the Argonautic expedition, based on the poem by Apollonius Rhodius. As we have it now it is incomplete and scholars consider it an example of learned mediocrity rather than genuine inspiration. It shows a familiarity with the works of Virgil.

C. Pliny's relations with comparatively unknown authors

1. Ones addressed or mentioned in his letters

a. Licinius

Licinius Sura was an historian. Pliny writes a letter to Licinius to consult him about the ebbing and flowing of a spring in his country home. He says he has asked him because it is --- "quaestionem altissima ista eruditione dignissimam."[1] And he finishes the letter by saying again --- "Scrutare tu causas (potes enim) quae tantum miraculum efficiunt;"[2] The famous letter of Pliny about ghosts is addressed to Licinius Sura, and Pliny begins this letter to him as before by paying tribute to his great knowledge --- "Et mihi discendi et tibi docendi facultatem otium praebet. Igitur perquam velim scire, esse phantasmata et habere propriam figuram numenque aliquod putes an inania et vana ex metu nostro imaginem accipere."[3]

b. Cluvius Rufus

Cluvius Rufus was an historian whose works have not

1. IV 30-1
2. IV 30-11
3. VII 27-1

survived. Pliny mentions him in one letter.[1]

c. Augurinus

Augurinus is a poet whom Pliny mentions in one letter. Pliny is writing to Pompeius Fulco and says he has been for three days attending the recital of Augurinus, the poet, and has heard the poems with pleasure and admiration. "Poematia appellat. Multa tenuiter, multa sublimiter, multa venuste, multa tenere, multa dulciter, multa cum bile. Aliquot annis puto nihil generis eiusdem absolutius scriptum, nisi forte me fallit aut amor eius, aut quod me ipsum laudibus vexit."[2] This is a typical example of Pliny's kindly feeling and encouragement of the younger men of his times.

d. Pompeius Saturninus

Pompeius Saturninus is mentioned by Pliny in six letters. He was a successful advocate who published his speeches and wrote histories and poetry. In writing to Erucius about Pompeius Saturninus, Pliny says --- "Amabam Pompeium Saturninum, hunc dico nostrum, laudabamque eius ingenium, etiam antequam scirem, quam varium, quam flexible, quam multiplex esset: nunc vero totum me tenet, habet possidet."[3] You will like his orations, Pliny says, and -- "Idem tamen in historia magis satisfaciet vel brevitate vel luce vel suavitate vel splendore etiam et sublimitate narrandi. ---- Praeterea facit versus, quales Catullus aut Calvus."[4] Pliny says in this same letter about Saturninus' writings --- "Est ergo mecum per diem totum: --- eundem etiam --

1. IX 19-5
2. IV 27-1
3. I 16-1
4. I 16-4

cum remittor, non tanquam eundem lego."[1]

2. Ones not addressed or mentioned in his letters.

We shall next list the comparatively unknown authors whom Pliny does not mention in his letters.

a. Curiatus Maternus - a poet

b. Saleius Bassus - a poet

c. Arruntius Stella a poet

d. Sulpicia a poetess

e. Aemilius Asper - a grammarian

f. Marcus Valerius Probus - a grammarian

g. Quintus Asconius Pedianus - a grammarian

h. Mucianus - an historian

Writings of the time mention others but they are considered to be too minor, merely passing popular writers, because none of their books have survived, and what bits are quoted in criticisms or letters are not worthy of a place in this paper. It was a time of popularity for writers and many are mentioned by their friends, lauded even, who have no claim on the memory of posterity.

SUMMARY

In the Silver Age writing and writers held an important place in the minds of the educated people. This interest in writing was due in a large part to their early education. In the grammar, that is secondary, schools literature was carefully studied and in these schools a familiarity with the writings of well known authors both Greek and Roman was fostered and especial stress was laid on the study of poetry. In the rhetorical schools the pupil was given an excellant training in the art and practice of effective public speaking.

We learn from Pliny's letters that there was interest in both reading and writing. Interest in reading is shown by Pliny's mention of books being read to the master by the slave and of the habit among some men of making extracts from books as they read them. Pliny shows us that there was a wide spread interest in writing by the very fact that he writes so many letters encouraging friends to write or to write more or to publish what they have written. The recitatio mentioned twenty-five times by Pliny in his letters, is another proof that many people were writing and were reading their literary productions to their friends. The practice of writing seems to have included many kinds of writing because Pliny, in many different letters, speaks of friends who are writing poetry, history, letters, drama, both tragedy and comedy, and speeches.

Oratory was a vital interest to many and Pliny tells us of the careful preparation of the speeches and of the interest of the audience in the speech as a literary production and he deplores the fact that the custom of having hired applauders was creeping in.

From his letters we know that Pliny himself had a very real interest in reading and we believe that his thorough early education trained him to read and enjoy the best authors both Greek and Roman. We know this because he quotes so many times from Homer, Demosthenes, Virgil, Cicero, and many others. Pliny expresses great admiration for his uncle, Pliny, the Elder, who supervised his education. Pliny's habits of industry, eagerness for study and making extracts of books read, may be traced in part to his uncle's example.

In his own writing Pliny tells us that he imitated Cicero and he admired Demosthenes, Homer, and Virgil. To Pliny writing was a very serious thing and he gives us a pleasing picture of his keen love for the country and his country villas where he can get seclusion for writing. He even tells us of taking writing equipment with him when he goes hunting. To Pliny, ideal old age, such as he describes Spurinna as enjoying, is a life in the country with time for writing and for the enjoyment of the company of his friends.

Pliny spent a great deal of time preparing his speeches. He liked long speeches and he revised them and polished them and read them to his friends for criticism. It was only natural that he felt pleased when his speeches were recognized and applauded. We know that they were because he speaks of people standing seven hours to hear one, and of the senators' rising when he entered and of his wife's keen interest in his speeches.

Pliny's achievement in verse writing was not great although we know from his letters that he wrote various kinds of verse. Like his model, Cicero, whose verse writing was only mediocre, Pliny's greatest ability

did not lie in verse writing.

Among well known authors of his day, Pliny was proudest of his friendship with Tacitus and their interchange of writings. Pliny was a pupil of Quintilian and he tells us of his great admiration for him. He had pleasant relations with Martial and was pleased with Martial's poem about him and he knew Suetonius quite well because he addresses several letters to him. Silius Italicus he tells us about in one long letter and from several references, we are conscious of his great love and respect for Pliny, the Elder. We know, also, from a reference to him that he knew Frontinus.

We are surprised that Pliny does not mention Juvenal who without doubt must have been an important figure in the days in which Pliny lived. And he does not mention Statius, or Valerius Flaccus. He addresses letters to or mentions in his letters four comparatively unknown authors: Lucinius, Cluvius Rufus, Augurinus, and Pompeius Saturninus. There are quite a number of comparatively unknown authors whom Pliny does not mention.

Pliny's letters are entertaining, smoothly written and give us a good picture of the times, particularly with regard to the attitude toward writers and writing in the Silver Age.

OUTLINE OF STUDY FOR THE A. M. DEGREE

Mary Eleanor Hutchinson

Outline of Study for the A. M. Degree

Subject of Thesis - Writers and Writing in the Silver Age as seen in Pliny's Letters.

Outline

I. Writing

A. Education

1. Training in literature and writing

2. Training of an orator

B. Interest in literature

1. Interest in reading
   a. Book read to master by slave
   b. Making extracts of books read

2. Interest in writing
   a. Pliny's estimate of the importance of writing (examples in letters urging friends to write)
   b. The Recitatio
   c. The practice of writing (both prose and poetry) How wide spread?

C. Oratory

1. Careful preparation of speeches

2. Audiences and their applause
   a. People hired to applaud

D. Pliny's own reading and writing

1. Pliny's life

2. His reading
   a. His very real interest and pleasure in reading
   b. Details of his reading (authors read and quoted)
   c. His uncle's influence on Pliny's habits as a writer
      i. He makes extracts

student

3. His writing
    a. His opinion on earlier writers
    b. Pliny seeks seclusion
        1. In the country
        2. In hunting
        3. Pliny's idea of an ideal old age
    c. Pliny's oratory
        1. The effort he put into it
        2. His fondness for long speeches
        3. His delight at having it applauded
    d. His verses

II. Writers

A. Pliny's relations with authors well known to us

1. Tacitus
2. Quintilian
3. Martial
4. Suetonius
5. Silius Italicus
6. Pliny, the Elder
7. Frontinus

B. Well known authors of his time not mentioned by Pliny

1. Juvenal
2. Statius
3. Valerius Flaccus

C. Pliny's relations with comparatively unknown authors

1. Ones addressed or mentioned in his letters
    a. Licinius
    b. Cluvius Rufus
    c. Augurinus
    d. Pompeius Saturninus

2. Ones not addressed or mentioned in his letters
    a. Curiatus Maternus
    b. Saleius Bassus
    c. Arruntius Stella
    d. Sulpicia
    e. Aemilius Asper
    f. Marcus Valerius Probus
    g. Quintus Asconius Pedianus
    h. Mucianus

III. Summary

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